



# Professional Development in Tertiary Teaching for Staff in Teaching Roles at Curtin Guidelines



# Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
2. Policy principles .....	4
2.1 Providing opportunities for staff .....	4
2.2 Casual/sessional academic requirements .....	5
2.3 Ongoing commitment to professional development .....	5
2.4 Supporting staff .....	5
3. Defining teaching staff .....	6
4. Defining professional development .....	7
5. Workload plans .....	8
6. Commitment .....	8
7. Funding .....	8
7.1 Casual/sessional academic staff .....	8
7.2 Contact and continuing staff .....	8
7.3 Staff teaching offshore .....	9
8. Recording professional development .....	9
8.1 Internal to Curtin .....	9
8.2 External to Curtin .....	9
9. Responsibilities .....	10
9.1 Line Managers/Heads of School .....	10
9.2 Individual staff member .....	11
10. Exemptions .....	11
11. References .....	11

# 1. Introduction

## Curtin Guidelines for the continuous professional development of teaching staff

This document is an explanatory guide to support the *Professional Development in Tertiary Teaching for Staff policy* (the Policy – accessed from *Compliance, Legislation and Policy* website for Curtin University: <http://policies.curtin.edu.au/> ).

The Policy is underpinned by:

- *Curtin's Teaching Excellence Criteria* to which excellent teachers can aspire; and
- Provisions contained in Section 56 of the *Academic, Professional and General Staff Enterprise Agreement 2012-2016*.

The guidelines are based on good practice, research into teaching and learning, and University-wide feedback from Curtin staff when reviewing the Policy.



## 2. Policy principles

*Professional development in tertiary teaching for teaching staff policy* – defining Curtin’s commitment to continuous development

### 2.1 *Providing opportunities for staff*

The University is committed to providing professional learning opportunities for staff in teaching roles both from an individual, professional development perspective and also from a University perspective to enhance teaching quality and assure the quality of teaching at Curtin.

From an **individual perspective**, the *Academic, Professional and General Staff Enterprise Agreement 2012-2016 (EBA)*, stipulates that:

- Staff are provided with career and professional development opportunities which balance the needs of the individual and those of the University (Section 56.1);
- Those professional development opportunities encourage a more highly skilled individual, provide greater employment opportunities, and promote recognition of those skills attained (Section 56.2); and
- Professional development activities are identified and incorporated in individual staff work plans (Section 56.3).

The Policy supports the EBA by encouraging staff to undertake professional development opportunities on an annual basis. This is professional development which is relevant to the individual teaching role.

From the **University perspective**, assurance of the quality of teaching is paramount for the institution. Therefore, professional development which is appropriate and relevant to the individual’s teaching role will enhance teaching quality.

Internal professional development opportunities embed *Curtin’s Teaching Excellence Criteria* which in turn provides the individual with a set of criteria in which to gather evidence of quality teaching and learning to assist them with academic promotions, career aspirations, as well as for strengthening Faculty, University and National award and grant applications.

## **2.2 Casual/sessional academic requirements**

The University has been committed to creating and maintaining an effective group of skilled sessional/casual academic staff, appropriately trained in teaching and learning at Curtin since 2007 when the Policy was first introduced. Casual /sessional staff come to teach at Curtin with a wide range of skills and experience in industry and tertiary teaching. In order to assure the quality of our casual /sessional academic staff and staff in a teaching role new-to-Curtin, are required to undertake the modules in the *Professional Learning Essentials* program (updated replacement program for the *Foundations of Learning* and teaching at Curtin program –commonly known as FoLT). In this way, all staff have a base-level of skills for teaching at Curtin.

All sessional fellows, casual/sessional academic staff and postgraduate students employed as casual academic staff in teaching roles are required to undertake a minimum of seven hours of professional development in teaching at the tertiary level, within the first six months of employment. These staff will be reimbursed for this investment of time.

## **2.3 Ongoing commitment to professional development**

To support the University's obligation in providing ongoing professional development opportunities for staff in teaching roles, an annual commitment of seven hours is prescribed. The intention is for this to be a developmental opportunity to benefit both the individual and the University.

## **2.4 Supporting staff**

The professional development undertaken will support the needs of the staff and the needs of the University, in particular the assurance of teaching quality and enhancing teaching and learning. The professional development considered appropriate is any professional learning activity relevant to teaching and learning processes, practices, or scholarship. The appropriateness within this range is determined by the line manager or Head of School, in consultation with the individual about their specific professional development needs.

### 3. Defining teaching staff

#### *Staff in a teaching role at Curtin – who does this include?*

The broad classification of *teaching staff* is defined as staff employed on a casual/sessional academic, teaching academic and/or teaching research academic contract. Within this there are a number of staff cohorts including; casual or sessional academics; postgraduate students employed as sessional staff; new-to-Curtin staff; staff teaching offshore; staff teaching online; teaching academics; and teaching research staff. The *Professional Development in Tertiary Teaching for Teaching Staff policy* is applicable to **staff employed for more than 12 hours per standard semester** ie;

- All **casual or sessional academics employed by Curtin** in a teaching role are required to undertake the [Professional Learning Essentials](#) program as a minimum requirement;
- **Postgraduate students** in a teaching role employed as sessional staff are required to undertake the [Professional Learning Essentials](#) program as a minimum requirement;
- **New-to-Curtin staff** in a teaching role are those staff commencing with the University for the first time or are re-commencing with the University after a 12 month break in service, are required to undertake [Professional Learning Essentials](#) program as a minimum requirement;
- All staff employed in a **teaching related role** are required to undertake relevant professional development in teaching and learning determined annually as part of their [Work Planning and Performance Review](#) (WPPR) in consultation with their line manager/Head of School;
- All staff employed in a **teaching role offshore (Partner Worker International)** at a Curtin campus are required to undertake relevant professional development in teaching and learning determined annually as part of their [Work Planning and Performance Review](#) (WPPR) in consultation with their line manager/Head of School; and
- All staff employed in an **online teaching role** are required to undertake relevant professional development in teaching and learning determined annually as part of their [Work Planning and Performance Review](#) (WPPR) in consultation with their line manager/Head of School.

## 4. Defining professional development

### *What types of professional development are applicable?*

The intention of the Policy is not to be prescriptive with regards to the types of professional learning activities so encompasses a wide variety of professional learning activities and programs. The applicability is that the professional learning must be **relevant to teaching and learning processes, educational practices, or scholarship**.

The emphasis is on the appropriateness to the needs of the individual teaching staff member. It is essential that the professional development is integrated with the teaching involved for improvement of teaching and development of the individual to occur. Programs that are relevant to the teaching and learning activities should be determined by the line manager or Head of School usually conducted during their Work Planning and Performance Review (WPPR) discussions. It is not the intention to mandate attendance at a centrally offered professional development program. A range of programs will be on offer but it is up to the individual and their line manager to determine what is appropriate for their professional development in order to enhance their teaching and learning.

There is a wide variety of professional development opportunities relevant to teaching and learning both internal and external to the University. Internal programs provided by *Curtin Learning and Teaching* (CLT) and specific teaching and learning sessions conducted by the School or Faculty. External to Curtin these may include teaching and learning sessions or programs hosted by other Universities, conference organising bodies, higher education training providers, or online offerings. Some **examples** include but are not limited to:

- Formal School or Faculty sharing events with the presentation of scholarship of teaching and learning or teaching and learning research findings;
- University-wide professional learning programs provided or coordinated by the Curtin Learning And Teaching;
- State, national and international teaching and learning conferences eg Western Australian Teaching and Learning Forum, Western Australian Network and Dissemination sharing events.

Some professional learning **accreditation requirements** may be applicable but will be determined on a case-by-case basis as to their relevance to teaching and learning processes, practices or scholarship, in discussion with the line manager/Head of School. It is not the intention to duplicate current requirements but to enhance and work with what is currently required by the accrediting bodies.

## 5. Workload plans

*Is the professional learning requirement included in workload plans?*

It is not the intention of the Policy to burden staff with additional tasks to already busy workloads but to ensure each individual in a teaching role has the opportunity to undertake professional learning that is developmental and tailored to the individual (by discussion with their line manager/Head of School).

The EBA prescribes that professional development activities are identified and incorporated in individual staff work plans and this is best achieved during the Work Planning and Performance Review (WPPR) discussion with their line manager.

## 6. Commitment

The Policy requires a commitment from staff in a teaching role to undertake seven hours per year for professional development in teaching at the tertiary level. The intention is that this is developmental and professional development activities identified to specifically to meet the needs of the individual.

Casual/sessional academics are required to undertake the [Professional Learning Essentials](#) program supplemented by other professional learning provided by the University and will be paid for the part thereof or up to 7 hours as prescribed in the Policy.

## 7. Funding

*Who covers costs incurred?*

### **7.1 Casual/sessional academic staff**

As with the current practice, payment of casual/sessional academics for the time to undertake the required [Professional Learning Essentials](#) is provided by the relevant School.

### **7.2 Contact and continuing staff**

The process, authorisation and payment for attendance at any external teaching and learning professional development activity will be the responsibility of the teaching area where the staff member is employed. This is consistent with current practice.

### 7.3 Staff teaching offshore

Any costs incurred for professional development in teaching and learning for staff in teaching roles offshore will be the responsibility of their area/school at that Campus (eg Malaysia, Singapore, Mauritius, Dubai). Where possible, Curtin professional development programs will be available in a distributed format.

## 8. Recording professional development

### *How and where is the professional development recorded?*

Identifying professional development is normally done during Work Planning and Performance Review (WPPR) discussions. On other occasions, staff will identify an appropriate professional learning activity eg workshop or conference and discuss or submit a request to their line manager for attendance, authorisation of funding and timing. As outlined in the section *Defining Professional Learning*, professional development relevant to teaching and learning will be provided internally by Curtin or externally to Curtin. Therefore the process for recording the professional development is slightly different for each.

#### 8.1 Internal to Curtin

Professional development programs facilitated or coordinated by CLT will be recorded when staff register to attend a specific session in the iPerform. Instructions for registration will normally be provided via broadcast email when the program is available e.g.

#### **Registration:**

1. Log in to **Staff OASIS**
2. Click on **iPerform** (under the “my work” tab)
3. Click on **Learn** (on the top bar)
4. Click on **Browse for Training**
5. Click on the **name of the course** you wish to attend
6. Click on **Request**, and then **Submit**

#### 8.2 External to Curtin

In discussion with the line manager/Head of School or after the specific workshop, seminar, or conference, the staff member can be manually added in iPerform by the individual eg

### Recording External Professional Development:

1. Log in to **Staff OASIS**
2. Click on **iPerform** (under the “my work” tab)
3. Click on **My Training** (icon in the middle)
4. Click on **Options** dropdown box (top left)
5. Click on **Add External Training**
6. Enter training details
7. Click **Submit** (goes to line manager for sign-off)

This will ensure that all professional development is recorded for each individual and will assist in future Work Planning and Performance Review (WPPR) discussions.

## 9. Responsibilities

### *What do I have to do?*

Specific professional development requirements for each individual is best managed at the local level via Work Planning and Performance Review (WPPR) discussions between the individual and the line manager/Head of School. These requirements will differ between roles and individual strengths in their role. The intention is for the professional development to enhance teaching and learning, assure teaching quality, contribute to career opportunities, and most importantly provide opportunities for ongoing learning for staff in teaching roles.

### **9.1 Line Managers/Heads of School**

Line Managers/Heads of School are responsible for implementation and monitoring compliance of the *Professional Development in Tertiary Teaching for Staff policy* in their work area.

- For contract and continuing staff in a teaching role, this normally forms part of the Work Planning and Performance Review (WPPR) discussion. In this way both the individual needs of the teaching staff member and the needs of the area can be identified. It is recommended that this be monitored annually.
- For casual/sessional staff in a teaching role, they must have undertaken the specified modules in the [Professional Learning Essentials](#) program within the first twelve months of teaching at Curtin. It is recommended that this be monitored each semester to ensure Curtin’s casual/sessional staff have the fundamentals for teaching at Curtin.

## 9.2 Individual staff member

It is the responsibility of each individual for their own professional development to actively participate in professional development that is directly relevant and applicable to their teaching situation. This should be in discussion with their line manager/Head of School in order to tailor the professional learning to the needs of the individual.

Professional development requirements prescribed by accreditation bodies, where appropriate to teaching and learning, should be included in the individual's annual career development.

# 10. Exemptions

## *Am I exempt?*

If staff are required to undertake a minimum of seven hours or more, of professional learning in relevant teaching and learning, then they will have met the requirements of the *Professional Development in Tertiary Teaching for Staff* policy and would not be required to undertake an additional seven hours. Any exemptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic or delegate.

# 11. References

1. Teaching Excellence at Curtin, Updated June 2017. Available at: [http://www.curtin.edu.au/cli/resources/teaching\\_excellence.cfm](http://www.curtin.edu.au/cli/resources/teaching_excellence.cfm)
2. Professional Development in Tertiary Teaching for Staff <http://policies.curtin.edu.au/>